off-shore oil explorations in the country;

(b) is so, what are the names of the oil companies who participated at the meeting; and

(c) what was the nature of discussions held and decisions arrived at?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI): (a) Presentations were made at New Delhi, London and Houston on May 7, 14, and 20, 1986, respectively to the international oil companies for the third round of exploration licensing in the Indian off-shore.

(b) The names of the oil companies who participated in the presentations are given in the enclosed statement. [*See* Appendix CXXIX, Annexure No. 40].

(c) Prospects of the offshore blocks put on offer, fiscal regimes and terms and conditions proposed for the contract were explained to the oil companies, who participated.

Setting up hydel power plant in North Bengal

682. SHRI CHITTA BASU:
SHRI RAMKRISHNA MAZUMDER:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of West Bengal has since a detailed scheme for the setting up of a Rs. 225 crore hydel power plant in North Bengal with Japanese collaboration; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by the Central Government for the clearance of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI): (a) and (b) No such proposal has been received in Central Electricity Authority. However, the Teesta Canal Fall Hydro-electric Project (67.5 MW) in West Bengal, costing Rs. 80.7 crores, was sanctioned by the Planning Commission in September, 1985 and was posed for OECF loan assistance during 1986-87. The Government of Japan have pledged a loan assistance of Yen 8.025 billion for this Project.

Setting up of Synthetic Oil Plants

683. SHRI CHITTA BASU:
SHRI RAMKRISHNA MAZUMDER:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had examined any proposal to set up plants for production of synthetic oil from coal;

(b) if so, what were the reasons for which the proposal was later abandoned;

(c) whether Government would review the earlier decision in the light of the report of Sir J. C. Ghosh Committee of 1953; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) to (d) In 1956 and in 1977 two committees, namely, the J. C. Ghosh Committee and the Chakravarty Panel examined the question of production of liquid fuels from coal. As the economics of such conversion was found to be unfavourable, the proposals were not taken up for implementation. In 1984 the Sidhu Committee recommended conversion of coal to geseous and liquid fuels. Coal samples were got tested for their suitability for gasification. A pre-feasibility study report on conversion of coal to oil on a commercial scale was prepared, under the auspices of UNDP, UNIDO and Coal India Ltd. The report has examined a suitable technology for coal to oil Conversion and economics of a plant to manufacture 1 million tonnes of liquid products per